

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

6:00 P. M.

September 7, 2010

The regular meeting of the Edgefield County Council was held Tuesday, September 7, 2010, in the County Council Chambers, 225 Jeter Street, Edgefield, SC.

Members present

C. Monroe Kneece, Chairman
Willie C. Bright, Vice Chairman
Rodney Ashcraft, Councilman
Genia Blackwell, Councilwoman
Norman Dorn, Councilman

Others present:

Alton Brown, County Administrator
Lynn Strom, Finance/Budget Manager
Michael S. Medlock, County Attorney
Barbara R. Stark, Clerk to Council
and others as per list attached

Chairman Kneece called the meeting to order and the invocation was given by County Attorney Michael Medlock. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of September 7, 2010 council agenda was passed unanimously with a motion made by Councilman Dorn, seconded by Councilman Bright.

Minutes

Councilman Bright made the motion to approve the August 10, 2010 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Edgefield County Council. The motion was seconded by Councilman Dorn. At this point Councilwoman Blackwell asked the chairman for the floor. "At the August 10th meeting, we have ended up with twelve pages of administrator remarks or comments that are not relevant to what happened at the meeting. You (Chairman) actually asked the question, Mr. Administrator, do you have any remarks that you would like to add. He stated I am out of gas, lets move on, but yet we end up with an amendment to the meeting of twelve to thirteen to fourteen pages that were not relevant to anything discussed at the meeting. How can we add something that did not happen at the meeting into the minutes of the meeting?"

Administrator Brown stated that he was willing to so stipulate that. He stated, "I believe under the rules that you can add anything to the minutes you would like. Under the circumstances I am willing to stipulate that you are correct and I would ask that those administrator's comments be added to the September minutes. Chairman asked Councilwoman Blackwell if that was satisfactory. "Yes." Councilman Dorn made the

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motion to approve adding the administrator's comments to the September minutes of council. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilman Bright, seconded by Councilwoman Blackwell, to approve the August 16, 2010 Minutes of the Edgefield County Council Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Reports

Councilwoman Blackwell referred to the July 26, 2010 minutes of the Edgefield County Board of Trustees concerning the requested millage increase.

Mrs. Robinson reviewed the letter from Mr. Alton Brown addressing the hospital request to increase tax millage above the seven allowed per statute. The county has made the increase from 6.5 to 7.0 as confirmed by phone conversation with the effective date of June 30, 2010. Mr. Brown's letter states that further increase is not allowable under current South Carolina law.

Does this not require a vote by council? Mr. Brown answered, "No, I am just relating to them what Council had done at budget. That was the rate at budget and they had asked me and Mr. Kneece one evening if it was possible for them to get an increase in their millage rate and the answer was no. I confirmed that with legal counsel and sent council a copy of the letter. Mrs. Blackwell stated she did receive the letter and does not recall it being in the budget or it being voted on. I still have a copy of the budget with me

Mr. Brown asked Mrs. Blackwell "you do not recall the millage rate being discussed?" "Not at all."

After discussion, the decision of council, county attorney, and the finance director, the increase as stated in the hospital minutes is a typo because the millage for the hospital remains at 6.5. Seven is the max they can ever go to under how they were established. The attorney stated that "the 6.5 I believe is a mis-statement in the minutes. They wanted to go to from 6.5 to 7 and we could not do that."

Mrs. Strom, the finance director, confirmed the rate is still 6.5. So, stated Mrs. Blackwell, that has not increased to seven. "No." So there was no vote. Is that correct? The Chairman answered no. The chairman said "it could go to seven, right? Blackwell: With a vote of council. Mr. Medlock said if it is under our "cap." The chairman asked for a correction in the minutes.

Public Hearing

A public hearing was held to receive written and/or oral comments concerning Ordinance No.10-11-627, "An Ordinance to Provide for the Franchising Procedures and Standards for Private Ambulance Services in Edgefield County." There were no comments, written or oral.

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OLD BUSINESS:

Third reading of Ordinance No. 10-11-627, "An Ordinance to Provide for the Franchising Procedures and Standards for Private Ambulance Services in Edgefield County" was approved by a motion made by Councilwoman Blackwell, seconded by Councilman Dorn. Motion carried unanimously.

Third reading of Ordinance No. 09-10-628, "An Ordinance Implementing a County-Owned or Leased Non-Law Enforcement Vehicle Usage Policy." The administrator stated that he had received a request to pursue the purchase of an insurance rider that would allow civilian passengers in county cars and asked that the council defer third reading. Motion to postpone third reading was made by Councilman Dorn, seconded by Councilman Bright. Motion carried unanimously.

Second reading of Ordinance No. 10-11-629, "An Ordinance Amending the Land Development and Zoning Regulations of the Edgefield County Code of Ordinances to Conditionally Allow "Communication Towers & Antennas" in Those Areas of the County Zoned "RD".

The Land Development & Zoning Regulations chart (page 25), Title XV Land Usage, Sector 51: Information, Communication towers & antennas, RD, change "N" not permitted to "C" conditionally permitted.

Councilwoman Blackwell asked that before a vote by council was taken she had a request for an amendment to the ordinance. "To include the verbiage of "these provisions of this Section of the Land and Development Ordinance shall not apply to Amateur Radio, Citizens Band Radio, or television reception towers, masts, and/or antennas."

Attorney Medlock explained that Ordinance No. 10-11-629 is merely making a change in table. There is no where to insert the above verbiage other than amending Section 152.045. Motion was made by Councilman Dorn, seconded by Councilman Bright to amend Section 152.022 of the Land Development & Zoning Regulations of the Code of Ordinances. Motion carried unanimously.

Ninety Six RC&D Board

Ms. Elyse Benson, RC&D Coordinator, stated that two individuals from Edgefield County have agreed to serve on the RC&D Board and she would like to have a third member from the county. Council members have been unable to find someone willing to serve. Motion made by Councilman Dorn, seconded by Councilman Bright, to approve the two new members and notify Ms. Benson council cannot find a third individual to serve. Motion carried unanimously.

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Calliham Building

Mike Reed updated council on the Calliham Building. About 95% of wall partitions are in; all plumbing done; about 40% of the duct work; about 20% of the electrical. Progressing very quickly now. Bids will be in for the exterior. Bids for windows, floor covering will be in and that should take care of all of the contract work.

Mr. Reed feels he is within budget. There is about \$137,000 in the bank and another \$158,500 coming from the insurance company. He spoke with the insurance company and as soon as we spend out what we have the insurance company will start forwarding us the money (\$158,500). Mr. Reed explained how the drainage from the hill will be handled.

GLEAMNS Appointment

Motion was made by Councilman Dorn, seconded by Councilwoman Blackwell to appoint Willie Bright to serve another term on the "GLEAMNS Board. Motion carried unanimously. Mr. Bright represents the "public sector."

Plantation Point Drive

The administrator asked council's consideration to defer this request for thirty days. He stated that he is working with Guy and the Transportation Committee on roads. This particular road was deeded to the county 23 years ago but never accepted. Apparently there are a number of roads in the county of this same situation – there are deeds on a number of roads but never brought before council. Mr. Brown proposed looking to see how many of these roads were out there and get a handle on the number and develop a policy on how to handle these roads. Motion was made by Councilwoman Blackwell, seconded by Councilman Dorn to defer this request for thirty (30) days. Motion carried unanimously.

Lease-purchase plan / sheriff's vehicles

Chairman Kneece said he would like to look into this plan. Leasing these vehicles at the end of four years of leasing you can buy the vehicle for \$1.00, per vehicle. Councilwoman Blackwell agreed. Councilman Bright felt taking approximately \$48,000 from the contingency would be too much at this time with the new budget just beginning. Councilman Dorn wanted to know why the sheriff could not use some of the \$34,000 from his discretionary fund.

Motion was made by Chairman Kneece, seconded by Councilman Dorn to postpone the lease-purchase plan until the next meeting. The administrator will speak with the sheriff concerning the use of his discretionary funds. Motion carried unanimously.

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James Reid (Palmetto Ambulance Service) addressed council on the private ambulance services for Edgefield County. Mr. Reid was not too satisfied with requirements stated in the ordinance, causing his company to leave Edgefield County because of the expense that would be involved.

The administrator: “Nothing is forever – our ordinances are constantly in a state of evolution. So, if you (Mr. Reid) would like to come by someday and talk, we are open. Just because it passed third and final reading it does not mean that we slam the door on it. We glad to discuss anything that troubles you.

Signed to speak but passed: Nathan Cremean and Linda Nidiffer.

Art Biggs

He will be following the lease-purchase of the vehicles previously discussed. There are many things that should be looked into concerning this that he hopes council would be aware of. Mr. Biggs stated he will be following this procedure as he has been very much involved in this type of lease-purchasing previously.

Guests

Ron and Ginny Hartwig spoke concerning the communications and towers amendment.

Remarks by the County Administrator

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Council voted at the September 7, 2010 regular meeting of County Council to include the following comments by the administrator in the September minutes rather than the August 2010 minutes.

ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS:

The Edgefield Daily

County Administrator Claims “Hostile Work Environment”: Threatens Lawsuit July 7, 2010

The Edgefield County Council meeting Tuesday night was full of surprises over the entire two hours the meeting drug onward. Though much of the business was simple reading on ordinances drawing unanimous votes, a third reading on the Planned Development ordinance failed for a lack of motion and the proposed ordinance to create business licenses for all business in Edgefield County was accepted only as information. However, the real fireworks did not start to go off until late in the meeting with County Administrator Alton Brown making accusations of a “hostile work environment” and announcing plans to seek other avenues of employment for his future.

The first statements by Brown came an hour into the meeting saying Councilman Rodney Ashcraft had sent him a list of questions regarding the process that had been undertaken on the Calliham project and Brown felt the need to answer them publicly, rather than privately to all members of the council. Brown stated that ordinarily he would respond to the question emailed to him to all council members in like form, but due to his not responding in time, he wanted to do so at the meeting.

Administrator Post:

I actually stated:

“Councilman Ashcraft sent a questionnaire out to me sometime last week and I was not diligent in getting it back to him because I had computer problems and then we had the holiday. I would like to take an opportunity to go over these questions for a number of reasons:

(a) I think anytime anybody on the council sends out a questionnaire, as I told you in my interview; I think it is important that those responses go back to everybody.

(b) Some of the questions that I answered I told Rodney that I thought these were discussion questions and I would like to take that opportunity now.

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(c) And hopefully, when I get through here - and feel free anybody on the council to interrupt me and ask questions - maybe we can all be on the same page and move forward and get this renovation under way. You will know how the staff feels, what our understanding is of the project and hopefully it will be to the point where we can move on and not get bogged down on some of these questions that I consider petty.

However, the questions sent privately to Administrator Brown in an email, were issues that have never been addressed by the county council in an open meeting and Mr. Brown did not receive any such "directive" by Chairman Kneece on any of the matters contained in the questions by Councilman Ashcraft.

Administrator's Post:

Actually, the email came to me addressed to three (3) individuals:

FROM: RODNEY ASHCRAFT
SENT: MONDAY, JUNE 28, 2010 11:04 AM
TO: (1) ALTON BROWN; (2) MIKE REED
SUBJECT: CALLIHAM

Please review the questions in the other email and answer to the best of your ability.

From: "Rodney Ashcraft"
To: (3) Michael Medlock
Date: Jun 24, 2010 12:23 PM
Subject: Calliham

"The council decided to forego the hiring of a contractor to save money," Mr. Brown stated. However, no such statement, conversation or directive was given by Chairman Kneece in any meeting prior to Mr. Ashcraft submitting his questions to Mr. Brown or afterwards.

Brown stated the council did vote on the replacement of the roof, but never recalled any discussion as to what Building and Planning Director Mike Reed's title was in connection to the project that has been the topic of much discussion in the public realm.

"The council simply approved it," Brown said

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Administrator Post:

My actual response to the following question was:

(c) Is it legal for Mr. Reed to direct sub-contractors to perform work on the new county govt. offices before the County Council has voted on it if those bids exceed a certain amount of money?

Sub-contractors have not performed any work at the Calliham renovation unless the work was preformed for the roofer. The council did vote on approving the bid for the roofer and at that time I do not recall any discussion about what Mr. Reed's title was, if he was qualified, if there had been any vote or whatever. The council simply approved it and we went on.

Mr. Reed's Job Title is Building and Planning Director and the last statement in his job description is "Performs other related work as required". In my mind, this suffices. So, I think we should stop talking

about whatever his job title is. His job title is Building and Planning Director and we do not have to worry about if he is Project Manager, Construction Manager, whatever.

Councilman Ashcraft interrupted Mr. Brown to state that twice he mentioned "kickbacks" were alleged to being made to Mr. Reed and asked for clarification of the accusations. Brown ignored the question and continued in his reading of the questions submitted to him by Councilman Ashcraft.

The question arose again by Councilman Norman Dorn later in which Administrator Brown stated, "Well, it was in twice. First in the Daily Edge (Edgefield Daily presumably) um, he was quoted, uh, that it was, that, uh that, uh, Mr. Reed, and then you questioned him about it on the 25th," Brown said. Brown then asked if Councilman Ashcraft questioned Mr. Reed on the matter of receiving "kickbacks" on June 25 and Ashcraft answered, "No".

No such quote by Councilman Ashcraft exists in any report by Edgefield Daily or any other media provider and we are unaware of any confidential exchanges between Councilman Ashcraft, Mr. Reed and Administrator Brown concerning such allegations.

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Administrator Post:

I never stated that there was a quote by Councilman Ashcraft in the Edgefield Daily and I confused and concerned by the Editor's comment that he is "unaware of any confidential exchanges between Councilman Ashcraft, Mr. Reed and Administrator Brown concerning such". Should he be aware of these conversations and how would he become aware of confidential conversations?

My actual comments in response to Mr. Dorn's question were:

Dorn: How did "kickbacks" get in the conversation and then all of a sudden get out of the conversation?

Brown: "Well, it was in twice: first in the Daily Edge.(1) He quoted that Mr. Reed and then (2) Rodney questioned him on the 25th."

As supported by:

(1) The Edgefield Daily
Opinion - A Column by the Editor
Problems Mount in Calliham Building Project
June 25, 2010

However, according to the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation:

No registered building code enforcement officer or contract inspector may be subject to personal gain by means of a fee, wage, commission, barter or any other form of compensation in currency, goods or services, in exchange for the furnishing of provide or offer to provide labor, material, appliances, equipment, plans, specifications, consultation or any services related to the construction, alteration, demolition or maintenance of any building or structure within the local jurisdiction for which employed.

No registered building code enforcement officer or contract inspector may engage in any work that conflicts or is perceived to conflict with his/her prescribed duties or the interest of the local jurisdiction for which employed.

The entire regulation reads, Section 165 - Conflict of Interest ([Hyperlink](#))

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⁽¹⁾ First, the term personal gain when used in this contest is understood by most people reading the Editor's Opinion to mean an act of fraud, deception or false deeds for the purpose of obtaining money, property or other assets by deception or to take illicit or unfair advantage of an office or position of trust for the purpose of obtaining money, property or other assets by deception.

Second, if you click on the Hyperlink, the Code has been altered to read as follows:

No registered building code enforcement officer or contract inspector may provide or offer to provide labor, material, appliances, equipment, plans, specifications, consultation or any services related to the construction, alteration, demolition or maintenance of any building or structure within the local jurisdiction for which employed.

No registered building code enforcement officer or contract inspector may engage in any work that conflicts or is perceived to conflict with his/her prescribed duties or the interest of the local jurisdiction for which employed.

The following titles do not exist in the South Carolina Code:

- Building Code Enforcement Officer
- Contract Inspector
- Registered Building Code Enforcement Officer
- Registrant

⁽²⁾ FROM: MIKE REED
TO: ALTON BROWN
DATE: JUN 25 2010 - 12:36 PM
SUBJECTS: KICKBACKS

As I mentioned to you this morning, last Monday around lunchtime I meet with Rodney Ashcraft at Penn St. renovation project to provide him with information on my construction background and to brief him on the status of the project. During our conversation, he mentioned that others had questions my involvement in the project and questioned if I was getting kickbacks from contractors on the project.

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I have never taken kickbacks or profited in any illegal or unethical manner on any of my projects working in the private sector or on any of my jobs working for local governments.

Building and Planning Director Mike Reed then rose to speak and was told by Administrator Brown that he “did not have to defend himself”. Reed took to the podium to state that Councilman Ashcraft never accused him of taking kickbacks and that during a discussion Councilman Ashcraft asked him about something constituents had asked him about the possibility that kickbacks could be involved.

Administrators Post:

My didn’t say “accused” I said “questioned”

“Well, it was in twice: first in the Daily Edge.(1) He quoted that Mr. Reed and then (2) Rodney questioned him on the 25th.”

Councilman Ashcraft stated he did not recall any such conversation and said he was only asking questions to Administrator Brown to receive answers posed to him by his constituents.

Administrators Note:

Questions which referred to statements the Edgefield Daily:

(1) Is it legal for Mr. Reed to acquire bids before or after the County Council had voted to do so?

The Edgefield Daily

Who Is In Charge? County Council Moves Forward On Calliham Project without Votes

June 23, 2010

At this time, county council members Ashcraft, Blackwell, and Bright confirm that no vote to place Reed as General Contractor has been taken nor has a similar vote for him to place the work out for bids has been approved by the county council, much less a vote on the plans he is using to solicit bids.

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(2) Is it legal for Mr. Reed to direct sub-contractors to perform work on the new county govt. offices before or after the County Council has voted on it if those bids exceed a certain amount of money?

The Edgefield Daily

Kneece on Calliham Building Project: "Let Us Handle It, You Stay Out Of It"

June 24, 2010

Chairman Kneece stated that the subcontractors are already submitting bids for the work under the direction and specifications provided by Mike Reed. However, the specifications provided by the county website in the bid packages are near non-existent. Chairman Kneece was asked if he had reviewed what is purported as specifications by the county and he said no.

(3) Technically, will it be the work of each contractor that is inspected by this outside party and not that of our building official?

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He is performing the work, he is being paid for the work and those contractors who his office oversees are bidding on this job, and all others in the county, and would be subject to his review and approval, now and for the future in Edgefield County.

(4) Would it be beneficial to refer to Mike Reed by another title such as "project manager" rather than General Contractor so as to take away any appearances that he is personally benefiting from this project?

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Now, I am sure that those who would rather spend more time trying to figure out ways to get around the legal aspects of conducting county business would say that Mr. Reed is not making a profit or being paid to perform his duties as the general contractor and the obvious lack of actual

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specifications (a hallmark of anything Reed is allowed to place out for bid) if proof he is allowed to circumvent the regulations.

I would argue that Mr. Reed is in fact being paid a wage for his duties and therefore profiting for acting as the general contractor.

(5) It has been mentioned that it is Illegal for any county employee to hold more that one position for the county. Is it true that Mike Reed does so as he holds a position as (1) "Edgefield County Building Inspector" and also (2) works in the capacity of "Tax Assessor?"

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Messages left at the State Labor, License and Regulation (LLR) for comment were not returned concerning the process untaken by Edgefield County and the several positions that Mr. Reed seems to be acting. At this time Reed, according to information provided, is acting as building director, assisting tax assessor, and now as a general contractor for a county commercial building project, when no person under state law can hold more than one position in a county government.

(6) Now that he is working on the new building and since he does not receive compensation from the county under a separate title, can this be considered a conflict of interest?

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However, according to the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, "No registered building code enforcement officer or contract inspector may engage in any work that conflicts or is perceived to conflict with his/her prescribed duties or the interest of the local jurisdiction for which employed."

The entire regulation reads:

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“8-165. Conflict of Interest.

No registered building code enforcement officer or contract inspector may be subject to personal gain by means of a fee, wage, commission, barter or any other form of compensation in currency, goods or services, in exchange for the furnishing of provide or offer to provide labor, material, appliances, equipment, plans, specifications, consultation or any services related to the construction, alteration, demolition or maintenance of any building or structure within the local jurisdiction for which employed.

No registered building code enforcement officer or contract inspector may engage in any work that conflicts or is perceived to conflict with his/her prescribed duties or the interest of the local jurisdiction for which employed.”

No, there is no way that could be remotely perceived as having a “conflict of interest” in anything with Mike Reed as the head County Building Inspector.

(7) What laws have been broken thus far regarding this process if the council was allegedly “polled” but plans to vote on these items at the next meeting?

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“I don’t think it was a decision like you are talking about, it wasn’t a formal vote,” Bright said. “I think the council was polled,” adding, “All the council knew” that Reed was going to act as the general contractor.

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County Council Vice-Chairman Willie Bright said that it was his understanding that the members of the council were “polled” to approve the appointment. But polling the council members in order to take an action is a violation of the “sunshine” laws. So, that could not have taken place.

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(8) Is Mr. Reed required by law to consult the council before he acquires bids for any project? If the council decides not to use plan "E" then the county will have wasted the time of the contractors who will have given bids on this project. If we were supposed to vote on (floor) plans A, B, or C then wouldn't it make sense that we vote on plan E that is being put out for bids?

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Councilman Bright was then directed to the floor plan, non-existent blue prints or building plans, and the designated "Scheme E" used in the presentation of bid requests. "If there is a scheme E it is safe to assume there was a scheme A, B, C, and D too. So when was the vote taken on this floor plan?" Edgefield Daily asked. "That's right," Bright replied. "All of the questions you're asking me, I can't tell you," Bright said, "because I don't know."

Edgefield Daily asked, "Who's in charge?" Bright responded, "(County Council Chairman) Monroe (Kneece) I guess." Councilman Bright then said it was his understanding that 2KM did submit additional floor plans and approval was given. "Who approved them?" Bright was asked. "I don't know," he said. Asked if the plans had to be approved before the council could approve the bids being placed for advertisement Bright said only, "I agree."

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According to County Council Monroe Kneece, the county council will vote on the floor plan being used to solicit bids, after the fact of the bids being obtained on June 28, at the July 6 meeting.

(9) Can Chairman Kneece or Administrator Brown solely make decisions such as making Mike Reed the "Project Manager" without taking a vote from the council?

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"I don't know," Bright said. "I think the best thing for you to do is see Alton (Brown) and Monroe (Kneece). They're the chairman, and um, I guess they had a hand in doing this".

(10) What, during this process is not the "Business" of the citizens of Edgefield County?

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So how, with no public votes, no public discussion, has this project been allowed to move forward? County Council Chairman Monroe Kneece has been quoted as saying that it was none of the public's business.

Really?

Our county council is spending hundreds of thousands of tax dollars on county owned property and how it is done is none of our business?

At the closing of the meeting, Administrator Brown made the statement that he said needed to be made due to a "hostile work environment" concerning his job.

Mr. Brown made accusations that due to comments in opinion postings by the Editor of Edgefield Daily, which he misquoted and took out of context and subsequently referred to members of council, who have no editorial control over Edgefield Daily, which he considered them to infer he was being placed in a "hostile work environment" and constituted grounds for legal action against the county.

He informed the council that he would be seeking other employment opportunities and was not ruling out legal action against the county, going so far as to place the county on notice of his intentions.

"I am not resigning", Brown said. However, he alleged that Edgefield Daily had implied "corruption" and illegal "kickbacks" (which have never been mentioned or reported by

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Edgefield Daily), “without offering any documentation”. Since no such articles have been published it is unclear what Mr. Brown was referring to in his complaint.

Administrator Post:

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“In my heart I believe it is not a question of whether or not there is corruption in our local government, but rather a matter of whether or not our "tenured leaders" can even spell "corruption" much less define it. In addition, where is County Administrator Alton Brown in all of this? Why the closed doors and refusal to meet with the press? “

Mr. Brown went on to misquote an opinion by the Editor in an effort to imply that there was collusion between sitting council members and a current county council candidate (which could be construed as a political attack on one of his future employers as well as two sitting council members re-elected to their current positions) by the employee (i.e.: Alton Brown).

Administrator Post:

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“It is time County Administrator Alton Brown goes on the record on the hard questions on county matters. The honeymoon is over. Step up to the plate or be relegated as one of the water bearers of the past who have been run out of the job for doing the same thing.

There may be more than one seat challenged in November and his job might just hang in the balance on the outcome, as well as county attorney Michael Medlock's. The single seat up for grabs in November could send a shockwave through the county government, even more if two seats are overturned.”

Administrator Note:

“And I assume that those three votes that you have talked about would be Genia, Rodney and Dean” is hardly a political attack.

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Edgefield Daily
A Column by the Editor
Posted July 15, 2010

Having followed Edgefield County politics and the county council for over a decade, it is clear that the long-term members do not like answering questions. This is true be it questions from a voter, resident, member of the press and most recently those from a fellow council member. Despite all of the recent drama, the fact remains that the two main questions posed by Edgefield Daily that preceded the recent attacks remain, to this day, unanswered.

The irony is the questions are very simple. When did the Edgefield County Council meet to appoint Building Director Mike Reed as the acting general contractor for the oversight of the remodel of the Calliham building and when did the county council agree to place the work out for bids?

Edgefield County Administrator Alton Brown offered what he stated were answers to any and all questions at the July 6 county council meeting. He did answer questions posed by Councilman Rodney Ashcraft, but neither he nor Chairman Monroe Kneece can answer the two most important questions posed above.

Administrator Post:

What I actually said was the following and no one asked questions afterwards. Despite the “who did or did not do what when”, no one asked any questions. The Council continued to approve bids without questioning anyone’s action or authority”.

“Councilman Ashcraft sent a questionnaire out to me sometime last week and I was not diligent in getting it back to him because I had computer problems and then we had the holiday. I would like to take an opportunity to go over these questions for a number of reasons:

- (a) I think anytime anybody on the council sends out a questionnaire, as I told you in my interview; I think it is important that those responses go back to everybody.
- (b) Some of the questions that I answered I told Rodney that I thought these were discussion questions and I would like to take that opportunity now.
- (c) And hopefully, when I get through here - and feel free anybody on the council to interrupt me and ask questions - maybe we can all be on the same page and move forward and get this renovation under way. You will know how the staff feels, what our understanding is of the project and hopefully it will be to the point

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September 7, 2010

where we can move on and not get bogged down on some of these questions that I consider petty.”

C. Monroe Kneece, Chairman

Willie C. Bright, Vice Chairman

Rodney Ashcraft, Councilman

Regenia Blackwell, Councilwoman

Norman Dorn, Councilman

ATTEST

Barbara R. Stark, Clerk to Council